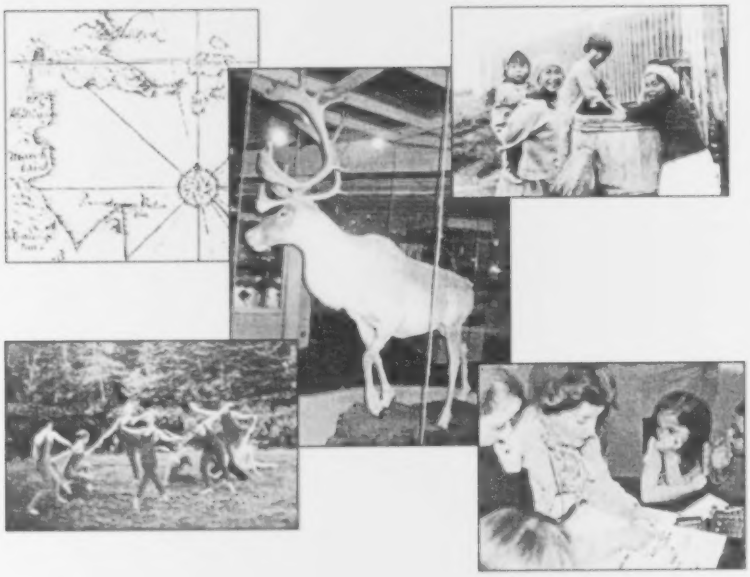
A Cultural Policy
For
Newfoundland and Labrador



GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND
AND LABRADOR
Department of
Tourism, Culture and Recreation

Honourable Julie Bettney, Minister

November, 2002

Context

Newfoundland and Labrador has a culture that goes to the heart of our identity and the quality of life we hold dear. As peoples of the North Atlantic, our unique cultural heritage and our striking natural heritage is evident in the creative work of our artists and artisans. Over the years, Newfoundland and Labrador has made a very significant cultural contribution to Canada. It is essential that current and future generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians benefit from these unique strengths and resources.

It is also essential that present and future generations see their culture as a source of pride, identity and enrichment. Cultural resources, whether they be creative, archival, archaeological, architectural, educational or historical, play a key role in the vitality, enrichment and growth of culture.

Our culture is as diverse as it is unique. The experiences of our people and their contacts with other peoples over many years have helped develop, shape and strengthen it. Government shares with its citizens the obligation to protect and enhance our culture so generations to come can enjoy its benefits.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has committed to nurture and preserve this province's culture for its intrinsic value, as well as for its social and economic benefits. It has defined this commitment in cultural policies that include a vision statement, mission statement and set of guiding principles.

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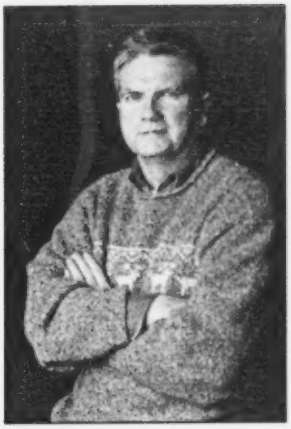
Context

Our cultural policy recognizes and supports:

- the concept of artistic freedom;
- access to tangible and intangible cultural heritage, natural heritage and the works of our creative community;
- cultural products and activities that are targeted to achieve and sustain quality, whatever the medium or its context;
- the contribution culture makes in other areas of provincial priority, including social and economic development;
- the importance of education and its role in creating, reflecting and nurturing our culture;
- the significant contributions artists and artisans make to our identity and our quality of life;
- the role of tradition bearers in preserving and passing on our intangible heritage;
- the distinct roles of professionals and volunteers in cultural development;
- a transparent criteria-based decision-making process for public funding of cultural projects/programs;
- the role of provincial institutions in preserving and promoting our culture.

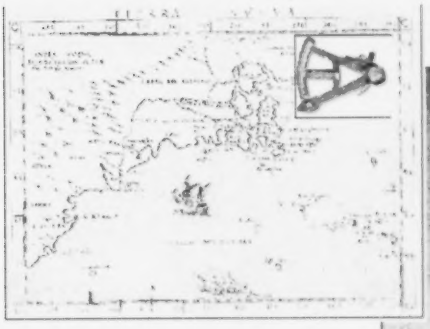
Context

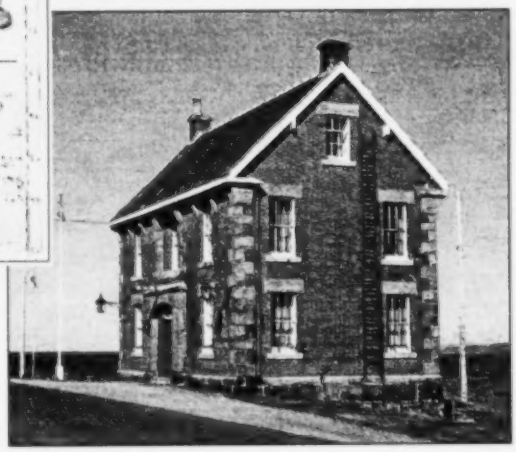


In developing its cultural policy, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has taken guidance from the broad definition of culture used by the United Nations. Specifically, for this document, culture means the arts and the tangible/intangible heritage of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. This encompasses the activities of artists and arts professionals, heritage professionals and volunteers, Aboriginal and European-based tradition bearers. It also includes cultural industries, institutes, associations, organizations and enterprises.

This document represents Phase I of the Cultural Policy Development Program. It is a base from which to develop a Strategic Cultural Plan. The plan will outline the goals, objectives and key actions which flow from the guiding principles. It will address responsibilities, resource requirements, priorities and time lines.

Many thanks to the working group on Cultural Policy, the Association of Cultural Industries, the Association of Heritage Industries and everyone who supported the idea and development of drafting this policy.



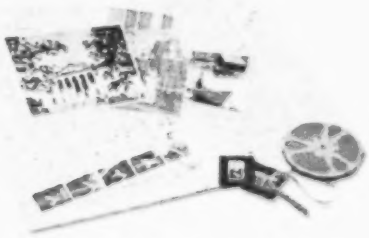


Vision

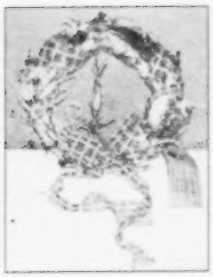
Our people take great pride in the cultural identity that binds us as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It enhances our lives socially and economically, inspiring us to maintain our unique culture for future generations.

Mission

To preserve, protect and strengthen the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations.



Guiding Principles



The following principles will guide the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in setting cultural goals and developing cultural strategies, initiatives and programs. For the purpose of this policy, the term culture means the historic and contemporary arts and the tangible/intangible heritage of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. This encompasses the activities of artists and arts professionals, heritage professionals and volunteers, Aboriginal and European-based tradition bearers. It also includes cultural industries, institutes, associations, organizations and enterprises.

1. The Inherent Value of Culture

A strong cultural identity is the very foundation of a society's ability to prosper, grow and adapt to changing global circumstances. Our culture defines our identity, enriches our lives and provides economic opportunities. It is a valuable asset, worthy of public support and investment.

2. Culture and Quality of Life

Culture is a strong measure of our quality of life, our vitality and the health of our society. Participation in cultural activities improves the quality of individual and community life, promotes social inclusion, raises self-esteem and expands people's horizons.

3. Socio-economic Development

Investing in culture brings economic as well as social returns and builds social capital. Cultural industries contribute greatly to economic regeneration in rural and urban settings. Government recognizes that artistic quality, cultural integrity, sustainability and professionalism are essential to ensuring economic stability in this sector.

4. Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Aboriginal peoples, along with the early Europeans and those who have come since, have contributed to the diverse nature of our cultural identity. Government places high value on preserving, nurturing and celebrating this diversity. As languages are an important vehicle of culture, they merit special attention. Government encourages the practice, transmission and protection of language, including Canada's two official languages, Aboriginal languages and Newfoundland and Labrador's many dialects.

5. The Value of Cultural Professionals and Volunteers

Optimal development of our cultural resources requires a strong cadre of professional artists, a variety of heritage professionals and a corps of dedicated volunteers province wide. Government recognizes the value of creating a supportive environment for our artists and heritage professionals. It also supports and encourages the special role volunteers play in governing, managing and protecting the province's cultural resources.

6. Culture, Education and Lifelong Learning

It is important for young people and adults alike to know about their cultural and natural heritage and to develop their artistic interests and talents. Schools, post-secondary institutions, private business and public libraries all contribute significantly to the lifelong learning process. Government investment in such learning ensures that our cultural resources will continue to grow.

7. Professional Development and Training

Artists need continuing education and training to fully develop their talents and art forms. Heritage professionals similarly need training/development to establish and maintain expertise. Not-for-profit organizations and volunteers, who govern, manage and protect cultural resources, require special support and encouragement.

8. Cultural Access

Every resident of Newfoundland and Labrador has the right to the widest possible access to cultural resources and activities. In addition, cultural professionals need support to access local, national and international markets.

9. Cultural Stewardship and Partnerships

All citizens share the responsibility to preserve and enhance their culture for future generations. Government has a special responsibility to safeguard the province's cultural resources, to assist in their development and to promote the wise use of these resources. To achieve success with this, it encourages partnerships between individuals, regions and all levels of government. Government also recognizes the need for strong partnerships with the private sector.

10. Arms-length and Peer Assessment

Public involvement on provincial boards and advisory bodies provides necessary autonomy to the province's major cultural programs. Government recognizes arms-length funding and peer/professional evaluation as important principles in the operation of the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council and the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Glossary

The following glossary of terms has been developed to indicate the specific meanings of terms used throughout this policy document:

Arm's length. "Arm's length" for professional and artistic decision making is the principle whereby a government-funded agency has the authority to establish its priorities, policies and funding programs, as well as establish guidelines and criteria, independent from government influence.

Art. The conscious use of skill and creative imagination, especially in the production of aesthetic ideas and objects. The arts are defined as visual arts, literary arts, crafts, music, theatre, dance, performance, film, media arts and interdisciplinary arts.

Cultural development organizations. Non-profit or service organizations that foster development in the community by offering cultural programming for the cultivation and promotion of young artists, or supports members of the cultural community by raising public awareness of arts and/or heritage.

Cultural diversity. The presence and participation of many different cultural communities within the general culture of a society, and the recognition that these communities are equally beneficial to the society at large.

Cultural enterprises. Private companies, non-profit and commercial organizations engaged in the distribution, promotion, or sales of work in any arts or heritage discipline.

Cultural industries. Industries which deal mostly with goods and services of a cultural content.

Cultural infrastructure. Resources that support and /or provide public access to arts and heritage, including artists and others working in culture, for the creation, production, dissemination and promotion of arts and cultural products. Resources include: a) cultural facilities and equipment; b) organizational structures; c) human resources; d) training and educational structures.

Cultural landscapes. Distinctive settlement and building patterns, features in the landscape that result from particular economic, social or cultural activities, as well as the natural landscape features that have special historical and spiritual significance. They contribute greatly to a unique sense of place.

Cultural product. The result of artistic or heritage endeavours available for purchase or consumption, including festivals, performances (theatre, dance, music) visual arts, fine craft, archives, museums, historic sites, archaeological sites, libraries and all products that arise from cultural industries.

Glossary

Cultural professional. An individual whose education or experience qualifies him/her to work in the creation, research and understanding, management, dissemination, interpretation and promotion of arts and/or heritage. This includes artists, artisans, archaeologists, archivists, academics, educators, librarians and other professions in the arts and heritage sectors.

Cultural resources. The tangible and intangible components of arts and heritage from our ancient and contemporary cultures, as well as the infrastructure, expertise and recognition required to create, develop and maintain these components.

Cultural tourism. Tourism motivated by an interest in other peoples, other places, other cultures. It focuses on museums, art galleries, performance events, cultural festivals, historic sites, authentic cultural attractions, natural attractions, architecture, archaeological sites and local customs and cuisine.

Culture. The arts and the tangible/intangible heritage of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. This encompasses the activities of artists and arts professionals, heritage professionals and volunteers, and aboriginal and European-based tradition bearers. It also includes cultural industries, institutes, associations, organizations and enterprises.

Dissemination. The circulation of exhibits, promotion and distribution of artworks and literature, extension services, library and resource centre activities and special outreach activities which diffuse information about a culture within or outside the cultural boundaries.

Intangible cultural heritage. The intangible aspects of our culture which include oral traditions, customs, language, religion, music and song, knowledge of landscape and navigation, skills and belief systems. These have enabled us to forge a culture over the many years we have lived in this land.

Natural heritage. The protection, conservation and management, in unimpaired condition, of large wilderness areas, representative areas of all the province's eco regions, areas which contain rare natural phenomena, natural wildlife populations, wildlife habitat and endangered species, so as to preserve diversity and distinctiveness, and to support an ecologically sustainable future for the benefit of present and future generations.

Peer evaluation. The use of independent artists and other professionals working in the field to assess grant applications, advise on priorities and make recommendations to a funding/granting agency on the awarding of grants. Requests for funds are assessed by committees of the applicants' peers and augmented by the input of independent assessors where required. Committee members are selected for their accomplishments, experience and expertise.

Glossary

Professional artist. An individual who aspires to earn a living through art creation or performance, and is recognized by his or her peers as an artist.

Professional arts association. A non-profit organization whose aim is to improve the professional lives of artists by directly furthering the interests of artists, creators, arts organizations, and members of the arts community through activities related to policy development and delivery of professional services, including public awareness and arts advocacy.

Professional arts organization or company. An organization dedicated to the creation and /or dissemination of art on a professional basis. Newfoundland and Labrador examples include, among others, theatre companies, music companies, film and video companies and dance companies.

Professional heritage association. A non-profit organization whose aim is to improve and support those working in the areas of intangible and tangible cultural heritage through activities related to policy development, professional development, best practices, information sharing and heritage advocacy.

Stewardship. The management, protection and development of cultural resources according to plans developed in consultation with government departments and agencies, cultural professionals, communities and members of the private sector and the general public.

Sustainability. A method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged. Sustaining funding is a necessity for most cultural endeavours, and it is reasonable to expect sound financial practices and good management in return for the continuation of funding.

Tangible cultural heritage. Those aspects of cultural heritage that are of a physical nature, including library, archival and museum collections, buildings and structures, archaeological resources, cultural landscapes, cemeteries, monuments and artifacts of any kind.

Tradition. An inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behaviour (as a religious practice or a social custom); the handing down of information, beliefs and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction.

Tradition-Bearer. An individual who is recognized by his/her community as having a special role in the practice and transmission to future generations of traditions, skills, songs and stories. They are the guardians of our intangible cultural heritage.

Volunteers. Members of the general public, cultural professionals, artisans, tradition-bearers and others who give freely of their time and talents in the administration, promotion and governance of cultural organizations and associations.

THE ARTS AND HERITAGE PROGRAMS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR:

Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council
Art Procurement Program
Arts and Letters Awards
Provincial Art Gallery of Newfoundland and Labrador
Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation
The Rooms
Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador
Provincial Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador
Provincial Archaeology Program
Provincial Historic Sites Program
Heritage Grants
Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
Policy
Federal/Provincial Cooperation and Agreements

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